United Nations A/AC.183/SR.319

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 February 2010

Original: English

Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Summary record of the 319th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 10 November 2009, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Badji ..... (Senegal)

Contents

Adoption of the agenda

Update on developments since the previous meeting of the Committee

The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and developments in the political process

Presentation by the United Nations Environment Programme on its environmental assessment of the Gaza Strip following the escalation of hostilities in December 2008-January 2009

Consideration of draft resolutions on the question of Palestine

Other matters

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent *within one week of the date of this document* to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

Any corrections to the record of this meeting and of other meetings will be issued in a corrigendum.

09-60012 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Update on developments since the previous meeting of the Committee

2. **The Chairman** congratulated Nigeria, which was a member of the Committee, and Lebanon, which was an observer, on their election as non-permanent members of the Security Council. He himself had made a statement before the Security Council at that body's 14 October 2009 meeting on the situation in the Middle East, in which he had expressed concern about the situation in East Jerusalem and urged the Council to act on the recommendations of the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (the Goldstone report). Later that month, he had sent a message on behalf of the Committee to the Jerusalem International Forum organized by the Al Quds Committee and the Yasser Arafat Foundation on 28-29 October 2009 in Rabat, Morocco, in which he had stressed the importance of the question of Jerusalem in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. During the General Assembly debate on the Goldstone report, held on 4-5 November 2009, he had taken the floor to express the Committee's support for the report's recommendations and to urge the General Assembly to endorse the reconvening of a Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to discuss ways to ensure universal respect for that Convention.

The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and developments in the political process

3. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for Palestine) expressed his appreciation to all the members of the Committee that had taken part in the Security Council meeting on the Goldstone report and the General Assembly debate that had resulted in the adoption of a resolution (A/RES/64/10) that gave practical effect to the report's recommendations. The Palestinian side would make every effort to implement that resolution, including working with the Swiss Government towards reconvening a Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to consider measures to enforce the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

4. In conjunction with the Special Political and Decolonization Committee's consideration of Israeli practices in the Occupied Territories, a press conference had been arranged for members of families recently expelled from their homes in East Jerusalem. The Secretary-General, the President of the Security Council and the President of the General Assembly had all been kept informed of the crimes being committed by Israel against the Palestinian people. Concern over recent events in Jerusalem in the Islamic world had been reflected by the emergency ministerial meeting on Jerusalem called by the Executive Committee of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on 1 November 2009 and the Jerusalem International Forum held in Rabat.

5. Hopes for a new approach on the part of the new United States administration had been dashed by the recent reversal of the United States stand against Israeli settlement activity. As long as that activity continued, and the Israeli Government refused to accept the 4 June 1967 borders, the principle of sharing Jerusalem and other established terms of reference for the negotiations, the peace process could not move forward. It was owing to those frustrations that Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, President of the Palestinian Authority, had recently declared that he would not run for re-election. The Israeli side was playing with fire in Jerusalem, which was at risk for the outbreak of bloody confrontation. He reiterated that the Palestinian side would do its part to implement the recommendations of the Goldstone report, and urged the Committee members to vote in favour of the resolutions before it.

Presentation by the United Nations Environment Programme on its environmental assessment of the Gaza Strip following the escalation of hostilities in December 2008-January 2009

6. **Mr. Thummarukudy** (Operations Manager, Post-Conflict Branch, United Nations Environment Programme) introduced the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) study entitled "Environmental assessment of the Gaza Strip following the escalation of hostilities in December 2008-January 2009". Although repairing the immediate environmental damage done during that period was possible, it would cost US$ 44 million. Restoring full environmental sustainability to Gaza, where the major underlying issue for some time had been groundwater contamination,

would require an investment of US$ 1.5 billion over a 20-year period.

7. **The Chairman** noted that the main obstacle to repairing environmental damage in Gaza was the blockade imposed by Israel. He asked if Palestinian and Israeli experts had taken part in the study.

8. **Mr. Thummarukudy** (Operations Manager, Post-Conflict Branch, United Nations Environment Programme) said that in line with the Programme's usual practice in post-conflict situations, only international experts had been used in order to prevent questions about impartiality from arising. Palestinian experts had been consulted about which areas to survey, and both the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government had been given sets of all soil and water samples that had been sent back to Geneva for analysis.

Consideration of draft resolutions on the question of Palestine

9. **The Chairman** drew attention to four draft resolutions, entitled respectively "Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People", "Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat", "Special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat" and "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine", which were to be submitted to the General Assembly under agenda item 16 entitled "Question of Palestine". If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the draft resolutions on the Committee, the Division for Palestinian Rights and the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information.

10. *It was so decided.*

11. **The Chairman** said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the draft resolution on the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine.

12. *It was so decided.*

Other matters

13. **Mr. Saripudin** (Indonesia) said that his country's Permanent Representative, Mr. Natalegawa, would continue to take an active interest in the question of Palestine in his new post as Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.